

VZCZCXRO3443

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ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 281212Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY ZAGREB
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9487
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ZAGREB 000524

SIPDIS

FOR EUR/SCE, EUR/PPD, EUR/RPM AND EUR/ERA
OSD FOR POPOVICH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PGOV HR

SUBJECT: ZAGREB WEEKLY ACTIVITY REPORT - AUGUST 28, 2009

¶1. (U) CHIEF STATE PROSECUTOR TESTIFIES IN GOTOVINA TRIAL IN THE HAGUE:

Croatian Chief State Prosecutor Mladen Bajic testified this week before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the trial of Generals Gotovina, Markac, and Cermak. Bajic, who was a Deputy Military Prosecutor in Split from 1992 to 1996, testified that most crimes against Serb civilians in the aftermath of Operation Storm were committed by demobilized army personnel who were still wearing uniforms. Bajic noted that, as a prosecutor, he felt no pressure from superiors to prevent prosecution of Croatians for war crimes. He also said that since most of the post-Storm crimes were not committed by active Croatian Army soldiers, commanders did not have responsibility nor influence over those crimes and that such cases were forwarded to civilian prosecutors. He noted that prosecution of perpetrators of crimes against Serbian civilians began in 2000 when the ICTY transferred a great deal of evidence to Croatia. Bajic reported to Poloff that he met with ICTY prosecutor Brammertz while in the Hague and that Brammertz thought his testimony was fair. (CZimmer)

¶2. (U) ONE PERSON KILLED, ONE INJURED IN DEMINING ACCIDENT:

One Croatian deminer died and another was seriously injured while working on a demining project in Petrinja near Sisak. This brings the number of deaths due to landmines for 2009 to three. The company involved, Heksogen, worked on several USG-funded projects, however the site of this incident was being demined with Croatian government funds. (CZimmer)

¶3. (U) U.S. COMPANY NORTRHOP GRUMMAN LIKELY TO BID ON CROATIAN SHIPYARDS:

Daily paper Jutarnji List reports that the U.S. company Northrop Grumman has purchased tender documentation for two Croatian shipyards, Kraljevica and 3.maj, which are among six Croatian shipyards being privatized by the government in order to meet EU accession requirements. Northrop Grumman is reportedly interested in using the shipyards for refit and repair projects, though the company remains open to the possibility of resuming commercial shipbuilding. The press has also reported on several other interested parties, including many with local business ties, who have purchased the documentation for the shipyard privatizations. To date, however, Northrop Grumman is the only U.S. company reported to have done so. The tender deadline is September 30, 2009 at 14:00. (DMatijas)

¶4. (U) EMBASSY CO-ORGANIZES AMERICAN STUDIES SEMINAR FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS:

Working with Croatia's Education and Teacher Training Agency, the U.S. Embassy helped organize an American studies seminar for more than 180 Croatian English teachers from five counties in eastern Croatia. Four of the five featured workshops at the seminar included U.S. speakers. Author

James Beschta delivered a lecture titled "Poetry of Place: Reading and Teaching American Poetry." PolEcon Counselor Rick Holtzapple engaged the audience in a discussion on the American political system and U.S.-Croatian relations, while Econ Officer Derek Westfall spoke about the U.S. economy and its influence upon Croatia. Additionally, U.S. Fulbright scholar Larisa Buhin discussed contemporary U.S. society, explaining how changing demographics in the U.S. and our evolving understanding of diversity are influencing U.S. education. The seminar was particularly valuable in that it reached a large audience far from the capital with less exposure to our programs, and should lead to a multiplier effect as the teachers share what they heard with a broad range of elementary and high school students. (MCrnjakovic)

WALKER